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Missouri's cost of living remains among lowest in nation

Missouri remained the third least expensive state in which to live in the third quarter of 2001, according to a quarterly survey compiled by the American Chambers of Commerce Research Association (ACCRA).

The state's cost-of-living index decreased slightly to 92.4 from the previous quarter's 92.6 composite score. Of the 43 states reporting and the District of Columbia, only neighboring Arkansas (90.9) and Tennessee (91.7) had lower cost-of-living indices.

"Despite deteriorating economic conditions, Missouri has maintained a good quality of life at lower costs than most states," said Joseph L. Driskill, DED director. "This is just one factor that will help our efforts, especially in these economically challenging times, to retain and attract businesses to Missouri."

Once again, no Missouri cities reported an index over 100, which is the national average. The cities of Kansas City, Kennett, Poplar Bluff and St. Joseph did not report in the third quarter. Categories in which Missouri had the lowest-cost items during this time period were housing, utilities and transportation.

Cost of Living Indices for Participating Missouri Cities 3rd Quarter 2001							
City	Composite	Grocery Items	Health Care	Housing	Misc.	Transportation	Utilities
Columbia	97.9	96.5	96	94.1	100.9	94.3	107
Jefferson City	92.3	92.8	91	84.2	99.9	93.1	88.7
Joplin	88.2	89.0	100.7	80.8	96.9	80.4	78.3
Nevada	85.9	90.8	82.1	79.6	91.7	80.1	83.8
St. Louis	99.4	91.8	104	95.7	102.7	104.3	105
Springfield	90.6	95.2	100.7	84.2	95.5	91.6	75.9
Missouri	92.4	92.7	95.7	86.4	97.9	90.6	89.8
US Average	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Alaska, New England, California, and Nevada continue to be the most expensive areas to live, while the least expensive areas are the Midwestern and Southern states.

Chambers of Commerce in cities across the nation participate in ACCRA's survey on a volunteer basis. No cities in Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey or Rhode Island participated in the survey.

ACCRA's Cost of Living Index has been published since 1968. The items in the index have been chosen to reflect the different categories of consumer expenditures, such as the cost for groceries, transportation, health care, housing, utilities and miscellaneous goods and services. Weights assigned to relative costs are based on government survey data regarding expenditure patterns for mid-management households. All items are priced in each place at a specified time and according to standardized specifications.